The Inquirer

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The Revival of Liberal Religion

THE FRIDAY MORNING SESSION AT THE ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

(The last session, held on April 22nd, of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, discussed International Liberal Religion.)

THE final session on Friday morning was devoted to the work of the Churches in the international field. Miss Margaret Stevenson presided and in introducing the first speaker, the Rev. H. Stewart Carter, she recalled their first meeting at the inauguration of the Unitarian Young People's League. He was elected the President; she was debarred from membership because she was a week too old. She said that Mr. Carter would speak about the situation of the Liberal Churches in Europe; Dr. Dana Greeley would report on the astonishing revival of Unitarianism in America, and Miss Garry on the work of the International Union of Liberal Christian women.

Liberal Religion in Europe

It was of Italy that Mr. Carter spoke first. The situation from the Liberal point of view was not encouraging. Roman Catholicism dominated the situation. The I.A.R.F. headquarters in the Hague were in touch with one Liberal group; this worked under a very serious handicap. If its leader's book was displayed in any bookshop the proprietor ran the risk of being banned.

The Church exercised a powerful influence upon the Government at every level. It had the last say in matters relating to education both as regards to appointments and personnel and to the nature of the teaching provided.

From Italy the speaker turned to the countries beyond the Iron Curtain. Here it is possible only to say his report on the struggle and strivings of our people was profoundly moving in its courage and challenge.

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Where the Scandinavian countries were concerned there was disappointment. Neither in Sweden nor Norway could it be said that there were encouraging tendencies. The emphasis was orthodox. There was a close link between Church and State. In Norway, for instance, there was a Government Department for Religious Affairs. There was some measure of consultation between it and the Churches, but in the main, it was the Department that decided upon appointments.

Holland presented in many ways a parallel to our own country. In war years the Churches were crowded. The Churches became the centre of the Resistance movement. It was hoped that after the war the churches would continue to be supported in the same way and that they would remain the focus point of progressive thought and action. It has happened otherwise: there had been a drift from the Churches, Liberal and progressive action was being expressed through channels outside Church life. Dutch Liberal Christians were optimistically hoping that in due time their ranks would be strengthened by the exodus from orthodoxy of liberal minded Christians.

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It was obvious that while Mr. Stewart Carter hoped that the Dutch members of the I.A.R.F. would be right he had himself grave doubts in view of our own Unitarian experience in this country. He came next to our own position, summarising the ebb and flow of religious liberalism in Great Britain during the present century; the effect of two world wars, the influence of Karl Barth, the rise of neo-orthodoxy and the growth of fundamentalism.

The situation emerging from this made him wonder whether Unitarians ought not at this stage to be more aggressive; to say outrageous things of which orthodoxy would be compelled to take notice.

He instanced an experience in Cambridge. Dr. Mervyn Stockwood from his pulpit denounced Unitarianism and attacked him personally. "I purposely refrained from replying" said the speaker. "I feel the nature of the attack was such that it would make people enquire about Unitarianism. This was its ultimate effect".

He went on to tell how some undergraduates perturbed by the attack and intrigued to find out more about Unitarianism came to the Memorial Church. They came—and they stayed. Today there were two friends who came in this way, who were serving on Church committees.

In America

Dr. Dana Greeley followed and in his usual glowing and forceful manner told of the revival of Liberal Religion in America. It was, as Miss Stevenson said in introducing him an astounding story. But as the speaker outlined it one found that American Unitarianism, like other movements, our own General Assembly not excepted, has had its period of ebb and

flow; of decline as well as advance. Today it has to contend with problems very similar to our own.

In the early days of American Unitarianism Thomas Jefferson had declared that in a century every thinking person would be a Unitarian. But not many years after, Ezra Stiles Gannett was writing of the likely demise of this promising faith. At one period there were some 500 churches. The present number stood at 400 but there were also 300 fellowships. These were small groups meeting often in members' homes, and were the nucleus from which it was hoped new congregations would emerge.

The growth of American Unitarianism was not isolated from the religious revival generally in the United States. All churches recorded growth and extension. That of their own movement had been particularly outstanding. He estimated that 62 per cent. of the community attended church today compared with about 20 per cent. earlier in the century.

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Growth brought problems and dangers. These new fellowships and congregations had to be served. They needed ministers and there was a shortage. An intake of 40-45 men annually was necessary in the next ten years.

In the field of religious education there had been considerable progress. He knew of Sunday schools with as many as 600 scholars on the roll. This constituted a very real problem. Mrs. Sophie Fahs, their religious education expert, had said to him recently, that it was dangerous because it meant they were unable to provide the adequate educational service to which the children were entitled.

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Ideological problems were Dr. Greeley's next concern. The tensions between Theist and Humanist, between those who labelled themselves Naturalistic Theists or Naturalistic Humanists and those who thought of themselves as Christian Unitarians. There was a period when the tension did seem serious but he thought they had settled down with it now and the problem was less accentuated. They were not finding it too difficult to work together.

Dr. Dana Greeley thought that perhaps now in Britain we were approaching the kind of situation upon this issue, that they had in the States some twenty years back. He hoped we might solve it, learning from their experience, without undue division or conflict.

Further indications of growth were to be found in the establishment of two new Headquarters Departments. That for World Churches, which had existed for many years, was to be given full status and would have a full time officer, and maybe an associate. The other Department would be concerned with international problems and world peace. The setting up of the first Department would enable them to strengthen their role in the I.A.R.F. and other wider concerns. The second would deepen their people's awareness of their world responsibility.

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He made a plea for great co-ordination and co-operation between the American and British movements, more ministerial exchanges, and exchange of information and material. His week among us had helped him tremendously in his concern to understand our opportunities and problems. American Unitarianism was deeply aware of its debt to Unitarianism in Great Britain. He was impressed by the vitality the movement displayed and inspired by the fellowship in which he had shared.

Liberal Christian Women

Miss Garry then spoke of the work of the International Union for Liberal Christian women. They were soon to celebrate their jubilee with a special conference at Cambridge.

Following these speeches little time was left for discussion. Time enough though for a number of the I.R.F. to give us a quick picture of the activities of the young people in our churches. He spoke of their annual conference lasting a fortnight, their links contacts with small German groups, their enthusiasm and their small budget. From this country they got only ten pounds a year.

It was a session rich in the information it provided and inspiring in its presentation, for it enabled us to see that while Liberal religion in all countries, even in the United States, represents still a tiny minority movement, it goes forward to its tasks, faces its problems and challenges in a mood of hope and with a confidence that the future is full of promise.

A LAYMAN'S DIARY

April 14. *Stirlingshire.* Although we now live in Greater London, my wife and I do not regard ourselves as naturalised Londoners, and each Easter school holiday we board the *Royal Scot* at Euston (at the unearthly hour of 9.5 a.m. this year, instead of the more civilised 10 o'clock !), so that the boys—to their great satisfaction—may visit their grandparents in Stirlingshire and Glasgow. So tonight we are in a land where butchers are "fleshers" and paint-sellers are "drysalters", where the baker's and the confectioner's arts have not yet succumbed to mass-production, and where one is publicly exhorted to *Drink Pinta Illa Day* (yes, I really saw that on the side of a bus). We are in Scotland.

April 15. I sometimes think that my ideal daily paper would combine the news service of the *Times*, the features and leaders of the *Guardian*, and the type and layout of the *Scotsman*. The *Scotsman* (now part of Mr. Roy Thomson's empire, but none the worse for that) is full of good stuff, most attractively printed ; and its two long columns of "Letters to the Editor" deal trenchantly with deep matters of national, local and—last but not least—theological significance. At the moment, that confused Moral Re-Armament anthology of quotations called *Ideology and Co-Existence*, which appeared in all our letter-boxes the other day, is being "plugged" in the correspondence columns by its supporters. But the Editor manages to preserve a sense of proportion : today he gives pride of place to a letter deploring the plan to erect a cement factory on farm land at Oxwellmains (which, as every schoolboy knows, is near Dunbar).

April 16. I have no standing in the G.A., and my absence from its meetings next week will cause no detriment to its deliberations. But I do regret missing the meetings, and this year's programme promises to be of special interest. However, as the late Sir Boyle Roche once said, "no man can be in two places at the same time, unless he be a bird". I should particularly like to have heard the paper by Mr. Ian Sellers on the Unitarian pro-Boers of Liverpool (the notice of the meeting has reached me today). I wonder whether those white South Africans who complain of "meddling" from the United Kingdom ever reflect that today's meddlers are the descendants, in spirit, of other "meddlers" who risked unpopularity—and worse—by publicly maintaining pro-Boer views in 1900–1901.

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April 17 (Sunday). The ITV broadcast service this morning came from the Church of the Holy Rude, Stirling, a fine Perpendicular building (finished in 1523) where James VI was crowned (in 1567, at the age of 13 months). In 1656 the congregation split into two factions, the "Resolutioners" and the "Protesters" (that sounds almost like a G.A. Business Meeting, doesn't it ?), who erected a massive wall across the middle of the building and proceeded to use it as two quite separate churches. It took 200 years to unite the two congregations, and the wall was not demolished until 1936. So it is not only Unitarians who find it difficult at times to establish a joint ministry !

April 18. Opening the *Scotsman* at breakfast this morning, it was pleasant to see our Edinburgh minister, the Rev. Bruce Findlow, figuring in the correspondence columns with an effective letter criticising *Ideology and Co-Existence*. The book-let, he said, inspired fear and hatred rather than reconciliation ; but, as he also pointed out, it had proved quite unobtainable to a good many people, and we should probably be thankful for this.

One of the most fun-filled things the M.R.A. people did was surely to give themselves a name which suggests that any

kind of "re-armament" can be a good thing in itself. We may put up with material re-armament as a painful necessity, but re-armament can never be an unqualified good, and it is a profound mistake to imply that it could be, *in any* context.

Our *dis*-armers, too, should be careful to keep their message clear. I agree with today's *Guardian*, which regrets that 50 or 60 Aldermaston marchers took time off yesterday to demonstrate at London Airport against the arrival of the South African cricketers. I am not happy about the visit of this all-white cricket team from South Africa, and I shall not go to watch them play; but, as the *Guardian* says, "the appearance of demonstrators with an anti-nuclear warfare slogan and an anti-*apartheid* slogan on opposite faces of the same banner suggests, perhaps quite unfairly, the chronic malcontent who is willing to join in anything so long as he can protest about something".

April 19. This is the season of educational conferences, and the reports of them make good reading. What a pity, though, that, to judge from the press reports, *parents* only receive a mention when they are cited as scapegoats for the alleged deficiencies of their offspring, or of the younger generation as a whole. You would think that there were no good parents at all. In case I seem to be exaggerating, I am prepared to give half-a-crown to any named charity for each newspaper report sent to me quoting *any* complimentary remark about parents by *any* speaker at *any* educational conference held this week. I doubt whether this offer will cost me a penny.

April 20. I hear from *Christian Action* that the Bishop of Johannesburg is to speak on South Africa at the Central Hall, Westminster, on Wednesday, May 11th, at 7.30 p.m. Tickets (2/6 reserved, 1/- unreserved) may be obtained from *Christian Action*, 2 Amen Court, London, E.C.4.

New Ministry at Cross Street, Manchester

On April 9th, the Rev. Charles H. Bartlett was inducted into the Ministry of Cross Street Chapel. The service was conducted by the Rev. T. W. Roberts. The Rev. Arthur W. Vallance of Altrincham, who was to have taken part, was unfortunately prevented by an attack of influenza. The Charge to the Minister was given by the Rev. F. Kenworthy, Principal of the Unitarian College in Manchester of which Mr. Bartlett is now Tutor in Psychology, who is one of the past ministers of Cross Street. The Charge to the Congregation was given by the Rev. J. Harry Smith of Hyde Chapel, Gee Cross. The words of Induction were spoken in the service by Mr. Harry Howarth, Chairman of the Congregation. At the short informal meeting of welcome afterwards, Mr. Bartlett was welcomed by Mr. Howarth on behalf of the Congregation, by Mr. Stanford Jacks on behalf of the trustees of Cross Street and by the Rev. Maurice Reuser on behalf of the Manchester District of churches. In his reply Mr. Bartlett referred to the tragedy of the death of Dr. R. W. Wilde who had so looked forward in hope and faith to the rebuilding of Cross Street and to ministering in this lovely symbol of our belief in the worth and the future of our movement.

Induction at Mexborough

MEMBERS of Mexborough and Bolton Free Christian and Unitarian Churches, who have been without a Minister for almost a year, recently attended the Induction and Inaugural Service to the Ministry of the Rev. Lawrence Hallsworth, and generally welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Hallsworth at a reception which followed the service.

The service was conducted by the Rev. A. Fishow (Doncaster). The Charge to the congregation was given by the Rev. A. R. Dowding, and the Charge to the Minister was given by the Rev. Albert Smith.

Mr. Dowding said Mr. Hallsworth had come in the best sense of the word an Evangelist. "His duty as Minister here is to give you inspiration and he must also be able to find inspiration, and what better place than among you?" he added.

Mr. Smith, of Knottingley, said he had accepted an invitation to officiate at the induction service, long before it was known that he should come to Mexborough—his home town. "It is 30 years or more since I left this church to train as a Unitarian Minister," he said.

Dr. R. P. Hardy, Chairman of the Church, officially welcomed the Minister. He said, "I sincerely hope your stay with us will be a long and happy one. I have no doubt that under your spiritual ministry this congregation will go from strength to strength."

IN A BUDDHIST COMMUNITY

By Marie B. Byles

A STRANGE urge drove me to a lonely Burmese Buddhist meditation centre attached to a fantastic fairyland pagoda visited by thousands of pilgrims but unknown to Europeans. On arrival my nun friend and interpreter and I went to "pay respect" to the head monk who officiated as registrar to the large community of monks and nuns—to "pay respect" you crouch down like a frog with your head on your hands on the floor! The russet-robed registrar was seated slightly above his audience of nuns and pilgrims whose hands were held reverently in prayer-fashion. He was calling the roll and allocating tasks to the nuns who waited like well-trained dogs for their master's direction. I felt resentful even though I already knew that in Burma monks do no work and that people acquire great merit by feeding, serving and giving them money—not being allowed to handle money themselves, it is handled for them by boy-novices, or in this monastery by male lay-meditators of whom there were 15 to look after the 11 monks.

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The nuns numbered 150 or thereabouts, and formed, I found, the unpaid labour force. They kept the huge pagoda-grounds clean and also the meditation centres and the brush and scrub around. They filled the large water-pots. They provided out of their own resources at least one tasty dish for the monks and all that was required by those too old to go to the villages for alms. Then there were the pilgrims and their rest houses, and if pilgrims had not brought their own food, the nuns provided and cooked for them, also. True, pilgrims would give a donation in return, but as there is little merit in giving to nuns, the latter would have to go to their villages to get what more was necessary.

As I listened to the self-complacent genial authority of the registrar-monk, my gorge rose. But probably only a sincere disciple of the Buddha, familiar with his life and teaching and one who had imbibed sex-equality and anti-clericalism almost with her mother's milk, would have felt quite the same volume of "righteous indignation"!

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The first thought was, "Let's get back quickly to the Mandalay meditation centre where sex does not matter and the instructor is a layman". But then the Instructor's words came back, "Never run away from pain; it will only return". There was nothing for it but to stay and learn understanding and tolerance for a social order utterly abhorrent, and loving-kindness for men who offended my deepest convictions. The least shadow of ill will prevents right meditation because it prevents oneness with all. The ill will had therefore to go. The task was not easy. It took 14 days of strenuous meditation to acquire the detachment and kindliness of an anthropologist.

I then saw this monk-worship as the cohesive force which makes the Burmese one nation (for the other religions, Christian, Hindu and Muslim hardly count). If the monks were dishonoured the people would be demoralized, for the small monastery is the soul and life of the thousands of little villages which are the real Burma, and whose inhabitants are perhaps the happiest people on earth, for they have enough to eat and no waste at all. I saw, too, that if a reformer were to try and deflect to the nuns some of the huge sums donated to the Pagoda, the nuns would be the first to complain, for they would be deprived of the opportunity of acquiring merit by serving the monks.

The meditation movement in Burma is a reform movement. It aims at teaching lay people how they, as well as monks, may be delivered from suffering here and now. But, though reformist it does not seek to overthrow the old gods. It seeks only to reform the reformers. "They do their work; we do ours", said the lay Instructor. The new and the old flourish side by side. And how much hatred, misery and bloodshed are avoided because they do! And how much misery, hatred and

bloodshed would Christendom have avoided had we been equally tolerant! This, as I see it, is the only tolerance worth anything, a tolerance which appreciates and understands the other's viewpoint and does not aim at changing it.

FAITH & UNDERSTANDING

MIRACLES

By A. J. Long.

THE question of miracles is still one which bothers some people. Generally speaking, Unitarians do not believe in miracles nowadays—but this has not always been the case. At one time, even in Unitarian circles, the possibility of miracles was openly conceded. Indeed, the miracles recorded in the Gospels were commonly regarded as a conclusive demonstration that Jesus, even though he might not be the Second Person in Trinity was certainly of supernatural origin. This was the attitude not only to the actual works of Jesus, but also to such miracles as the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection.

But within the last 150 years, a change has taken place. We have become so imbued with the scientific attitude and its conception of inevitable "law-abidingness", that we now almost take it for granted that miracles just do not happen—and cannot happen. It would probably be true to say that this repudiation of miracles is one of the distinctive features of the liberal faith, for the Church as a whole continues to ignore the scientific attitude, and still believes in miracles.

The Roman Catholic position is that, within the pale of the Church (and the proviso is important) miracles have always occurred and still occur—and this is more logical than the official Protestant attitude, which accepts only those miracles recorded in Scripture. The Catholic attitude is hardly surprising, for the central feature of Catholic worship, the Mass, is in its very nature a perpetual miracle.

But the possibility of miracles of a different order is still fully conceded. The reputed cures at Lourdes form a familiar example. There is also the well-known instance of the alleged miraculous liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, an event supposed to confer supernatural benefits. In the excellent treatment of the subject of miracles in his book, *An Unfettered Faith*, the Rev. A. P. Hewett states that the St. Januarius miracle is alleged to happen two or three times a year. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, the event is believed to occur no less than eighteen times a year!

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The Roman Church still required two to four well authenticated miracles before it will admit any particular individual to the official roll of saints—but it is very interesting to note that acceptance of these miracles is not demanded *de fide*. This means, in effect, that one can disbelieve in certain generally accepted miracles, and still remain a good Catholic—a striking instance of the tolerance which even Rome is prepared to exercise in some matters.

But normally, it would be true to say that the Roman Catholic faith is definitely built upon miracle, and it is quite obvious that most unthinking people, despite the official Protestant attitude, are inclined to accept the Catholic view. An apparent miracle is always accepted as a sure sign of divine intervention, and an incidental proof of the existence of a divine reality.

One has only to think of the widespread interest in spiritualism and faith-healing, and the persistent legends of unusual events, such as the alleged appearance of the "angel" of Mons in the First World War, or the unusually calm water at the time of the Dunkirk evacuation in the second. I was most interested to discover, from a recent radio programme, that in actual fact, the conditions for the Dunkirk evacuation were by no means ideal. The legend, apparently, is entirely fictitious. But this, I think, only serves to make it all the more significant. Significant too, is the tendency of even intelligent people to base their theism on things which cannot be fully explained by science, such as alleged extra-sensory perception, the secret of life, or the process of growth.

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In determining our attitude, it is important that we should distinguish carefully what belief in miracle really *implies*. As Mr. Hewett points out, the words "miracle" and "miraculous" are often loosely used nowadays, especially by journalists, who speak of a "miraculous" escape, "Miracle drugs", and the "modern miracle" of television. In a sense, there is nothing wrong with this, for etymologically speaking, "miracle" only means "something to be wondered at". But within the Christian Church, "miracle" implies a definite violation of the natural order, engineered by God himself for specific purposes.

Modern Unitarians however, believe that such violations of the natural order do not and cannot occur. It is something on which we can afford to be dogmatic. If, as we believe, God is in some measure immanent in his creation, then natural law is an expression of his being, and of the way in which he has ordained that the universe shall operate. A violation of natural law, therefore, would represent an act of divine self-contradiction, something which must obviously be ruled out. Even Catholic theologians have always agreed that God cannot do that which is inherently contradictory. He cannot, for example, make a circle square.

Unitarians believe that miracles can be ruled out on precisely similar grounds. A genuinely authenticated miracle, assuming for the moment, that such a thing were possible, far from confirming the faith of a Unitarian, would raise serious doubts in his mind regarding the nature and existence of God. It would also undermine his faith in the law-abidingness of the universe, which is the pre-condition not only of science, but even of everyday living. Unitarians therefore cannot accept the view that a miracle rebounds to the glory of God, and the good of man. The truth is, in fact, entirely the opposite. Nor do we believe that religious or moral truth is in any way authenticated by miracle. A miracle is by definition a species of conjuring trick, and (again, I follow Mr. Hewett) it is difficult to see why it should be assumed that religious truth needs to appeal to what looks suspiciously like magic. Religious truth depends on its own inner appeal to the heart and mind of man, and is neither strengthened nor undermined by changes in the physical world, whether these be normal or abnormal. Miracles, in short, are unnecessary as well as impossible.

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This conclusion, however obvious, is probably less generally accepted now than it once was. It is sometimes argued at the present day, that since God is the supreme First Cause, responsible for, but not subject to the laws of Nature, it is perfectly possible that, occasionally, he should act directly, without the intervention of secondary causes. This is not particularly convincing. As F. R. Tennant would say, the fact that God has chosen one particular method of maintaining the universe, automatically rules out any other method. In any case, the whole concept of a God who is over and above and outside the natural order of things, is incompatible with the idea of divine immanence—and without this, no really satisfactory philosophy of religion is possible.

I see no reason then why we should not stick to our guns in this matter, and affirm confidently that miracles do not happen. This does not mean of course, that we are left with nothing to wonder at. A sense of wonder is essential to religion, but true wonder springs from an awareness of the extent to which the whole of life is mysterious and exciting. Our entire existence is one perpetual miracle—in the original sense of the term. One of the sad things about the miracle-seeking attitude is the underlying assumption that most of life is so hum-drum and ordinary, that there is nothing about it to inspire belief in God. The attitude of Walt Whitman really represents a far greater spiritual depth :—

"Why should I wish to see God better than I see him to-day? I see something of God every hour of the twenty-four, and every moment thereof".

(To be concluded)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS—Illustrated

Officers, Wives and Overseas Visitors

The Men (*from left to right*): The Rev. A. W. Vallance, Dr. Dana Greeley, Dr. Staple (from Washington), The Rev. John Kielty, Mr. A. L. Blake (the new President).

The Ladies (*from left to right*): Mrs. Elspeth Vallance, Mrs. Staples, Mrs. Dana Greeley (standing behind), Mrs. A. L. Blake.

THE MEETINGS

A PERSONAL IMPRESSION

By a Minister

As one's memories of General Assembly meetings accumulate, year by year, there seems to be something of a special flavour about each of them, and yet, at the same time, something which is common to them all. I think, perhaps, what is most common to them all is the happy feeling of companionship, the pleasure of spending a few days in the company of many others who are of like mind with oneself, and the complete destruction of that feeling of isolation which so many of us, in churches some distance from their nearest neighbours, must suffer from time to time.

This feeling starts at the informal social gathering (held this year in the Hall of Essex Church) with which the meetings start. Old friends greet each other, new friends are made. In the first few minutes after my arrival, for instance, I was able to have conversations, long or short, with personalities so diverse as the Rev. F. Kenworthy of U.C.M., the Rev. L. Baker Short of Swansea, Miss Ruth Slater of Leeds, the Rev. N. J. Teape of Ipswich, the Rev. Keither Treacher of Golders Green, Miss Knighton, formerly of headquarters staff, and now of Maidstone, the Rev. Keir Murren of Liverpool, and the Rev. E. Shirvell Prize of Bolton. At what other period in the Unitarian year would such a "mixed bag" (if the phrase be permissible) be gathered together in one room? As the meetings went on, too, many others could have been added to that list—people like the Denbigh Hilborns of Hastings and the Goyings of Ditchling.

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The service, too—one can remember many such Anniversary Services, with many preachers. This year for me (and I am sure for others) the service was noteworthy, as always, for its singing—what a thrill to be part of a congregation that packs a church as big as Essex Church, overflowing into the aisles! It was noteworthy, too, for the sermon. I must confess that I have sometimes shared the feeling of a young man, last year, who wrote complaining that our General Assembly Services rather tended to "play for safety," allowing the preacher, by the very choice of personalities, not to state what many of the more advanced thinkers in the movement are wishing to say. Dr. Dana Greeley was not subject to any inhibitions, anyhow, and his sermon was, as readers will know, forthright and forward-looking. The remainder of the service was in many ways admirable—but perhaps I might echo that complaint of last year in one minor respect, asking if it is always necessary on these occasions to produce an Order of Service which seems in some regards rather like a pale echo of Anglicanism? We must have prayers, we must have readings (need they always be Scripture readings?), we must have an anthem and we must (emphatically, we *must*) have hymns; but I wonder if those who design this great service would not perhaps electrify their great congregation if they sometimes broke away from the traditional form and the traditional wording of what one might call orthodox Unitarianism.

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And so to business. I need not give any indication of the business meetings here—they will have been adequately reported before this appears in print. But I should like to say that I am very glad of the fact that the meeting to discuss matters of public importance has now been fitted in. I hope that it will become an annual event. It did what those of us who have argued for it in the past have asserted it would do—it provided Unitarianism with a public platform on which the social conscience of the movement could speak. It has also done something more, which few of us will have anticipated—it has unencumbered the business meeting, so that, for the first occasion for many years, this ended well ahead of its advertised time. I was most impressed by the way in which there was enthusiastically passed the appeal of Golders Green for the setting-up of machinery by which the General Assembly could state its opinion on matters of public concern, not always waiting for the annual

The visitor from Australia—Dr. Dana Greeley, standing in the entrance of Essex Hall.

The Man in Black

meetings. As Miss Eileen Kielty said, world events do not always time themselves to fit into our church year.

I must add that Miss Kielty is fast becoming an outstanding personality. I say this in no denigration of the Rev. Keith Treacher, whose speech proposing the motion was forthright and to the point. Always very much a "chip of the old block," she has now gained the right to a hearing as a sheer personality of her own.

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And what can be said of the other meetings? I did not attend them all—no one could. I went to the Ministers' Meeting, of course. I do not know what genius thought of inviting the Rev. S. R. Butler to speak on the professional status of the minister; but the thought was certainly a stroke of genius, for Mr. Butler, until fairly recently a member of another profession, contrived to throw much light on the way in which ministers look at their congregations—and of the way in which congregations look at their ministers! As always at the Ministers' Meeting, there was discussion and good-hearted argument. But it was a happy occasion, rendered the more happy in that Dr. Dana Greeley attended. We do not often have the pleasure of a leading American minister in our midst on these occasions, and it was a kindly thought of the Rev. W. Waddington to ask Dr. Greeley to start the discussion when Mr. Butler had finished. Indeed, one of the memories which will long stay with me as the aftermath of this year's General Assembly will be the friendliness and the warmth of our chief American guest.

Incidentally, there is one snatch of conversation which I think deserves the dignity of print. "I think this is wonderful!" Dr. Greeley said, holding up a copy of the *Inquirer* containing the text of the sermon which he had preached only a few hours before. "Oh, that's part of our usual service," said Miss Boxall, manager of the Lindsey Press. "And, after you have listened to the Essex Hall Lecture, you will find copies of the lecture on sale as you come out." She paused, and then added, with that twinkle in her eye which her friends know so well: "Mr. Kielty gave some lectures in America months ago; we haven't got copies of them yet!" Dr. Greeley roared with laughter at this revelation that slow Britain can sometimes beat American hustle.

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Then there was the Peace Fellowship, the Social Service Department, the Essex Hall Lecture, and all the rest. The meetings take a familiar pattern, on the whole, and do not change very much from year to year. The personalities on the platform may be different; the subjects discussed may be different; but each year there is another layer to be added to the memories which fill one's mind on such occasions.

I said at the beginning that each year there seems to be a rather special flavour. What was the special flavour of this year? On the whole, I think it was a flavour of *cheerfulness*. There have been years when some measure of despondency seems to have overcome the delegates, when they have felt that they are fighting a losing battle, that we are living in an age when liberal religion is both unfashionable and unsuccessful. This year there was none of that. True, the numbers in our professional ministry are getting less; true, there are not at present enough students in training to replace the inevitable losses which will occur; but I do not think that either Mr. Garrard or Mr. Kenworthy (whom we were all glad to see his old energetic self after his serious illness) allowed this to perturb them.

True, we still have the eternal problems of finance, with funds not enough to meet even the totally inadequate stipends which are all that most churches can pay at the moment. True, none of us (ministers or laymen) can be wholly happy about the sharing and grouping schemes which are gradually being evolved. But, with all these drawbacks and all these problems, the Unitarian Churches are still very much alive. We are working, we are thinking, we are carrying out our age-long task of providing a spiritual home for many who would otherwise be wandering and lost. While we can say *that* we shall continue, through all the difficulties and all the puzzles of the twentieth century. As one delegate said to me, over a cup of coffee, snatched in an interval between meetings: "No business man would carry on as we do. If we were a commercial concern, we should have closed down long ago: thank God we're not a commercial concern!"

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On that note, perhaps, these random impressions can best close. But one more point must be made. The Youth Meeting, on the Thursday evening, shocked some people. These young men and women were outspoken on matters where the elders would perhaps have been more restrained. But the young people were trying—trying desperately hard—to relate their religious beliefs to their everyday conduct. And, while there are not enough young people in our churches, or in any churches, those who are inside our organisation are the salt of the earth. It is on them that the future of Unitarianism and Liberal Christianity must depend—I am convinced that we could not leave the future in better hands. That, more than anything else, determines my own feeling of cheerfulness after the London Meetings of 1960.

"Will this get me to Bolton?"

"But I'm Telling You—"

AT THE MEETINGS

By A. R. Downing

TO cast an observant eye over Unitarians when they are in concourse assembled and consequently, for a few precious days at least, as thick as leaves in Vallambrosa, is of course to be bewildered by variety, to see fine faces growing older and new forms and figures moving about among the crowd. At every Assembly of course there are always a few signs of elegance, a fashionable hat here or a careful suit there throwing into greater contrast the more workaday but still varied habiliments of the majority. The Cloth of course is generally indistinguishable from the laity. Everything from sober suiting to country-wear is, among Unitarians, acceptable drapery for the clerical integument.

As between ministry and layfolk there are of course subtle differences in demeanour and there are certain tones in the clerical voice which are not always reproduced by the unparsonical. But one thing is certain. Believing, as we do, in the old principle of the priesthood of all believers, the transition from a clerical president to a lay one is for us the easiest thing in the world. At this year's General Assembly Mr. A. L. Blake most smoothly and perfectly assumed a spiritual authority, as our new *primus inter pares*, which had been so well wielded for a year by his presidential predecessor, the Rev. A. W. Vallance.

It was revealed to us that on the present chain of office there remains only one vacant link, which will be filled by Mr. Blake's name. Perhaps that is symbolic of the stage we Unitarians have now reached, when we feel the pressing need of new links with the past and the future. There is no doubt at all that in a layman of Mr. Blake's deep faith and personal calibre, we have a worthy upholder indeed of our spiritual succession. Mr. Blake is not a large man but everything about him counts, and in him we have a depth of personal faith, a quality of integrity and a business-like intelligence to be reckoned with and to be numbered among our present blessings.

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One has referred to our variety. It is, amongst us Unitarians, a triumphant quality. It is no more possible to cast persons in the same mould than it is to make an English Unitarian into a Unitarian American. And yet fundamentally the spiritual material of which Unitarians are both born and made is roughly the same the wide world over.

Dr. Elmo Greeley's presence amongst us—a presence so richly friendly and both boyish and dignified at the same time—was a sign that deep in our Unitarian hearts the same spiritual voice is calling, whether it be in London or Los Angeles. It is not always vibrant with identical concerns. But even those dear Non-Subscribers of Old Ireland breathe the same freedom-loaded oxygen as the ardent Transatlantic humanists or the now proudly labelled Unitarian Headquarters at Essex Hall. At long, long last, brooding and swelling beneath the surface divisions, there is an irrepressible urge of common concern for the spiritual side of our 20th Century life, an urge for more united expression in a world in which we Unitarians are rebels pleading and struggling for a spiritual revolution in the ways of organised religion.

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Is there perhaps a new sense of unity growing up amongst us? I think there is. It is not that there are numerous signs of this, but rather subtle and impressive tokens and hints of a change of mood. True, one free Christian swallow does not make a Unitarian summer but at least one likes to think there are signs of a new spring-time when it is bliss to be alive and there are larger concerns beginning to dawn over our religious horizons. The Anniversary Service for example, so well conducted by the Rev. Graham Short, went forward with a united momentum: it was obvious that people really knew their prayers, their responses, their hymns. There was, one felt, a new and more urgent sense of spiritual union. Dr. Greeley may have thought it was more British than American. Perhaps it was, but he himself was there in the Essex Church pulpit, a visible and vocal link between two separate religious enterprises with a common aim, his sermon a happy blend of Christian and universalist conceptions.

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And then, at our business meeting, there came an even more obvious sign of our ardent wish for more urgent and united self-expression as Unitarians in the religious and moral life of our land. A resolution was passed, with only four dissenting voices, calling upon our Council to find ways and means, perhaps through a Committee of Public Witness (which was the Rev. Tom Wardle's admirable suggestion), of making known our distinctively Unitarian opinions and standpoint on the burning public questions of our day. It will not be easy. No one expected it to be, but at last, if the Council performs its duty properly, there will be a Unitarian voice raised in the land. Press and people will know, not before time, that there is such a thing as a distinctively Unitarian attitude.

"But Abraham Isn't Chairman or Chancellor, John"

Charm—at the reception

Only one rather foolish voice was raised, imagining that an authoritarian point of view was going to be foisted on our religious body by some sort of supra-denominational committee. The idea is nonsense, as the Assembly itself soon made evident. It was ready and even eager to trust our Council, in its representative wisdom and intelligence, to think out the ways in which the new idea can be carried out. All this was a pleasant sign that we Unitarians are beginning to set less store by our prickly principles and individualistic prejudices and to attach more importance to intelligent mutual confidence at this hour in our fortunes when our denomination needs most urgently to claim a truly national status.

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And now a final impression which lingers pleasantly in one's memory. It did one a power of good to see some of our younger ministers—spruce, intelligent, vigorous and wonderfully articulate—springing up from time to time and giving voice to ideas and feelings in a way which showed plainly that we have some fine spokesmen for the future. Birtles, Findlow, Treacher, Wardle—to make a selection which is not meant to be invidious—of such one felt proud and grateful indeed that our movement has the great asset of their fresh gifts and intelligent enthusiasm. May such as they go forward with all boldness, none forbidding them.

THE WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Annual Meeting

THE 52nd Annual Meeting of the Women's League took place on Thursday, 21st April, 1960, in the Conway Hall, London. Miss Margaret Stevenson, the retiring President, took the Chair and led the opening devotions.

She gave a cordial welcome to two friends from the U.S.A., handing to each of them a buttonhole of spring flowers. Mrs. Dana Greeley read a letter of greetings from the General Alliance of Unitarian and other Liberal Christian Women and both she and Mrs. Lawrence Staples, of Washington, D.C., expressed their lively satisfaction at being in this country and able to take part in our meetings.

The reports of the General Committee and the sectional secretaries, also the financial statement were presented and adopted.

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The President expressed the great regret felt by all at the resignation of Mrs. Baily from the membership. She paid high tribute to her long years of untiring devotion, the able way in which the League's financial affairs had been conducted, and the wise advice which had always been offered in times of difficulty. She hoped that Mrs. Baily, as a vice-president, would feel able to keep in close touch with the League. She asked Mrs. Baily to accept a brooch, a cheque and a sheaf of flowers as tokens of affection from the whole League. Mrs. Baily thanked the members warmly, and spoke with deep feeling of the joy she had found in the work, and of her appreciation of the honour of being elected vice-president. The new Treasurer, Mrs. E. S. Hazeldon, was duly elected and welcomed to her office.

Mrs. H. M. Lear (Manchester district), proposed a vote of thanks to the retiring President. She spoke of Miss Stevenson's devoted service, her joy in the work, her sense of humour and her unfailing sense of fitness, and she presented her with a sheaf of flowers in gratitude for all she had done. She welcomed the new President, Mrs. M. Whitaker, who was well known, especially in the Sheffield district and in the International work.

It was announced that the newly-elected members of the Central Committee were Mrs. Curtin (Bristol), Mrs. M. J. Davies (S.E. Wales) and Mrs. Street (Glasgow). Mrs. Maurice Jones was warmly thanked for her services as editor of the League Letter, and the Rev. A. Tonkin was welcomed to the post which Mrs. Jones had been obliged to resign owing to ill health.

At the conclusion of the business, Miss Stevenson formally installed the new President and welcomed her to the office.

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After a hymn, an address was given by Mr. William Rathbone on "The District Nursing Centenary Appeal". Mr. Rathbone gave a brief outline of the District Nursing work which was started by his great grandfather, another William Rathbone, after the severe illness of his wife. She had been nursed by a Miss Mary Robinson, and Mr. Rathbone was so impressed by her skill that he asked her if she would continue her work among the poor of Liverpool. From that time District Nursing gradually developed and became organised.

Contrary to the general opinion, District Nurses are not entirely provided for by the state, and the Queen's Institute of District Nursing is therefore hoping to raise £250,000 for their Centenary Appeal. The money is needed for further training, for helping sick and retired nurses, for overseas work, and for spreading information in an attempt to overcome those illnesses which are caused by ignorance.

Mr. Rathbone's quiet but forceful appeal profoundly moved his audience, and when it was proposed that a retiring collection should be taken, the resulting sum of £26 was a gratifying response which was deeply appreciated.

The President thanked Mr. Rathbone warmly for his valuable address on a subject of such vital importance to women, and the meeting closed with a hymn and benediction.

M.G.M.

The President wrestles with the Agenda, and laments, like children who write for the "Inquirer".

VIEWPOINT

By The Unitarian Young People's League

THE "WELFARE STATE"

By Eileen Kielty

THE days of Kitty Wilkinson and Dorothea Dix are gone and no one regrets their passing. But what of the spirit of the Nineteenth Century Reformers, has that gone too? What has happened to the social conscience of Unitarianism? This year's Budget has made no mention of the old age pensioners—today's under-privileged. Politicians have regretted . . . . on television the "man in the street" has expressed his disappointment, but the churches have not said a word. What has happened to that passionate concern for others which is such a proud part of our heritage? Have we Unitarians forgotten the second commandment or the scriptures of James?

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The old-age pensioners must struggle on, on an inadequate pension, supplemented by National Assistance which many of them still reject as charity. "We have our pride." They have little else. A study of old people in Bethnal Green estimated that 75% of old-age pensioners in the area had incomes low enough to qualify for National Assistance. Is this what is really meant by a "Welfare State"? An old-age pension is surely intended to preserve the pride, dignity and identity of a man or woman when, because of old age, they can no longer support themselves. It should need no supplement. It is the right of every man to be an independent individual, and this right, which we as a denomination so cherish, should not be denied to anyone merely because they are old and can no longer earn an economic wage.

It was originally intended that the pension should enable those receiving it to live at subsistence level—an idea which has bedevilled thinking in this country for too long. No one, not even the most thrifty, devotes all his money to food, to rent and to clothing. The poorest of us have, and need, little luxuries, if they are only used for the cinema or a pint at the local. A policy which denies these is both cruel and inhuman, but it was not rejected on humanitarian grounds. It was abandoned because it meant too big a burden on contributors. Would it not then have been better to have looked into the whole question of the financing of pensions rather than to adopt the negative policy of supplementary grants from the National Assistance Board?

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Some old-age pensioners face a drop of as much as 75% in their incomes on retirement. This means less food—and enjoyment of food does not decline with the years. It means less fuel at a time when the warmth of a good fire is one of life's greatest pleasures. It means that grandparents can no longer have the joy of slipping the odd shilling into the hands of their grandchildren, but must instead become the recipients of kindly meant little gifts. Self-respect is one of a man's most precious possessions. What can we Unitarians doing to see that it remains a possession of old age? This isn't merely a matter for party manifestos or election promises, it is a matter for all thinking men and women.

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A man does not, however, lose his self-respect simply because of a drop in income. Retirement looms large in the lives of many. For some it is a time anticipated with pleasure when one will be able to read all of Gibbon or of Motley, and prune the roses properly; for others it is a dark shadow of loneliness or poverty; for all it is a time of adjustment. To many the loss of useful occupation is one of the most difficult things of old age. How can one justify one's existence? "Useless, that's what I am".

Some may be able to organise committees, but the great majority have neither the capacity nor the inclination to do so. They want to work. The ideal answer is a workshop suited to their skills and strength or out-work for those confined to their homes by infirmity but who nonetheless still have able hands and eyes. All that is needed is the opportunity, but it is disgracefully slow in being offered to many of them. It needs thought of course and planning. But are these really such rare commodities? Isn't it about time Unitarians did some thinking? What opportunities for work does an old-age pensioner have in your district? What are the voluntary bodies and the local councils doing to provide it? What is your church doing?

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Every aspect of care for old people presents a challenge. One of the least explored is the support given to the old by their families. Everyone is prepared to voice an opinion on this topic, but there are very few established facts. One interesting fact that did emerge from the study of old people in Bethnal Green is that although there was talk of neglect by families it was nearly always confined to *other* people's families, and the old people liked to believe that their own families were unusual in their goodness to them. Old people in fact do prefer to live near their families, although if possible in their own homes. It is reassuring to have their children near "just in case", and it is good to be able to help with baby-sitting and to have a gossip. In such a situation old people make far fewer demands on expensive hospital beds and are far happier. Why then is it that domiciliary services which would give support to the families who have to care for old people when they are sick are being built up so slowly? Why does housing policy generally take so little account of the desires of old people? It is no good providing neat little bungalows amongst the giant blocks of flats if the old people living in them are isolated from their children on other estates in far-off suburbs or in other towns where "You simply can't get homes for old people".

HAS HELL BEEN ABOLISHED?

By C. Ratcliffe

"I DON'T believe in Hell, so the idea of being saved *from* its terrors has no meaning for me. But the idea of being saved *for* something . . . to do the work that God appoints . . . has a great deal of satisfaction."

So says Mr. Stuart Holroyd in a review of recent religious books in *John O'London's Weekly*.

No doubt this categorical negative, though ambiguous, will be applauded in some quarters, but it would be interesting if it revealed Mr. Holroyd's conception of Hell.

Hell has such a wide variety of meanings. By much usage it has become an emotive word. Medieval theologians and the later reformers gaily used the word Hell to describe the ultimate physical agony of the unredeemed. We, their successors find it a telling word to describe a momentary discomfort. Taste, then, it seriously encompasses a whole range of disappointments, sickness, pains and anxieties. As an explosive an moments of impotence it has no equal. Unresolved is the vehemence which can be put into the word "Hell", but nevertheless it is still ambiguous.

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Yet it is hardly likely that an experienced book-reviewer intended to use it ambiguously. One cannot be sure, but it seems probable that the reviewer thought of Hell as the punishment meted out to unrepentant sinners. In the modern agnostic reaction (which more than one modern regards as the ultimate sin) he perhaps shares the view that physical torture is wholly incompatible with God's nature and man's dignity.

Perhaps the reviewer in question took over, as many of us took over, a mixed legacy of religious beliefs which included such a belief in Hell. For it is undeniable that for centuries Hell was very real to men. Hell with all its fascination, its appalling

physical agony was as undisputable as the stars in the skies. Pictures of Dante's Inferno, with the writhing limbs, the agonised eyeballs of tortured men and women were not long ago still displayed by the travelling showmen.

No doubt some moderns pityingly laugh at such ghastly portrayals of Divine judgment. It is incredible, say the thoughtful sensitive modern thinkers that men could believe that a loving God consigns unbelievers to such torment, incredible that generations lived and died in the belief of eternal or even age-long physical pain.

From that belief the pendulum has indeed swung. It has swung to, "No, I can't believe any man deserves such a Hell of suffering." A little later it swung to, "No, I don't believe in Hell, so the idea of being saved from its terrors is meaningless."

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Yet having discarded Hell, either as a spiritual shadow or imposed physical agony, have we discarded any underlying truth of judgment?

Can we deny, for instance, when we read of the sadistic murder of a child, not only our spontaneous horror but the far deeper feeling that God has a terrible judgment for those who violate innocency?

What that judgment may be goes beyond our outraged imaginations. Discard Hell as physical agony if we will, then take the modern bestialities of the past twenty years, put them in the scale side by side with the most hideous ideas of Hell, and we shall know in our hearts that they do not balance.

Men thought of Hell in the terms of physical agony being the most fearful experience men could know. Yet even a little thought will surely make us see that all the pain we could administer would leave untouched the man's inner regard of himself.

Throw away if we will the idea of Hell as physical agony, but something else still remains. We cannot and must not forget that Christ said the harshest words against those who violated innocency. Better, he said, that a man should know the agony of death by drowning than offend a child. Better, Judas had not been born than face the horror of betraying goodness. Better, a thousand forms of physical pain than the guilt and separation. It is possible that Judas could have borne the whip and the lash, but he could not bear his guilty separation.

And that is the Hell we cannot discard. We cannot escape the consequences of a persistent denial of the things of God. Whatever else Hell may be, it is at least a separation of ourselves of all which is fine and good. A deliberate awareness that we willingly embrace dark and evil things.

God alone knows how many chances he will give us to turn to him. Give them he will, but the last judgment will be ours, either to respond to him even in the self-inflicted agony of separation, or go to a Hell of shadows.

Our Illustration

We are indebted to the Rev. Keith Tresidder for the photographs in our Illustrated Supplement here.

Correspondence

Letters should be addressed to the Editor, "The Inquirer", 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1. They should not in general exceed three hundred words in length.

The Symposium

Sir: Dr. Geoffrey Nuttall's review calls for comment. He expresses disappointment that our Symposium holds only—"some approximate common or core"—some Declaration of Faith for congregational reference as in his denomination.

Dr. Nuttall has overlooked the fact that we are not governed by prescribed belief, but a movement composed of individuals who are Unitarians because they recognise the necessity for working out their own theological conclusions in the company of others who do the same. One does not expect the human mind to think uniformly on such matters as the nature of God and the object of religious belief or the function of living. The preface clearly states that the book is not intended to be a statement of doctrine for the use of all, but a talking point of comparative views. In this it succeeds, and no doubt if it were twice its size with twice the number of contributors, still more individual views would be expressed.

It must be admitted that knowledge of the Ideas used is a great help in understanding the language of a book, and Dr. Nuttall, coming to it with a rather different Ideas, would perhaps be unable to follow expressions arising from a build-up alien to his experience, but we are used to them and it may be that they make sense to us because we are accustomed to the reasoning from which they arise. As an example, "the ground of being must be eternal . . . . ." with which he quarrels, is a statement of fact if only for the simple reason that if nothing super-seded the present everything, that nothing would have to be. Dr. Nuttall's concept of sin is governed by the doctrines of his church and it is understandable that he fails to appreciate the word in E. G. Lee's context. And so on. . . .

The same thing applies when I read Dr. Nuttall's books, notably "The Holy Spirit and Ourselves". He uses phrases such as "a new man in Christ" and "to attain to adult manhood in Jesus", which mean little or nothing to anybody who recognises no mediator in human form between the Spirit which is God and himself.

Finally, although there is a great deal more to say, we are very conscious of the necessity to re-think our most cherished assumptions. That is what we are continuously doing, and it might be a step forward if Dr. Nuttall were to look into some of his own similar assumptions, notably the basis of his own doctrine, i.e., that the infinite Spirit of God could ever have been wholly and uniquely expressed in any one human incarnation.

Exeter. Yours, Enid Shears.

A Home for the London University Unitarian Society

Sir: May I introduce myself? I am fairly new to Unitarianism. I have only joined the denomination within the last few years. My church is housed in a post-war collection of huts that anticipate the luxury of a separate chapel some day; not, of course, in the foreseeable future. From inside my congregation and without I have heard the heart-rending wails at the decline of liberal religion and, I must say, I have felt inclined to join in myself. But then I think of my church and I do not wonder that few are tempted to take those first steps down the gravel path to a new religion. And indeed the very name "Unitarian" arouses no spark of recognition outside the denomination. No doubt it is passed off as some sect recently imported from America.

I have just returned from a visit to a dead church: a Unitarian church, of course, although the tombstone does not reveal it as such. It bears the label "General Baptist." I am speaking of the old meeting house at Deptford, London, built 1694, so we are informed. I believe this makes it the oldest Non-Conformist church in London. Perhaps it died of old-age, although the large hall houses an apparently flourishing youth-club, but this has nothing to do with Unitarianism. I believe it also boasts a minister: a Baptist minister. There is no congregation because our congregations used to be drawn from a wide area, and, possibly because of the locality no one has been drawn to Deptford of late. Now I wonder why? Have we no use for the oldest Non-Conformist church in London? Are we ashamed to be sent of these new sects from America? Are we ashamed to label our churches "Unitarian?".

As I have said before, I am a newcomer to Unitarianism and it is really not my place to suggest uses for a building of real historic interest but since there seems to be a need I feel I must do so. Why should not this old church building become a permanent home for the London University Unitarian Society. At present they circulate around the London churches. How are the Unitarians of the future? A chapel of their own might stimulate greater interest in the society and attract curiosity among outsiders. The church has the antiquity necessary to provide the right atmosphere for a university chapel. It is reasonably accessible from central London; the Southern Railway being near at hand, and Goldsmith's College, one of the colleges of the University, is only a short distance away.

What ever becomes of this old church, even if it remains disused, could it not carry the name "Unitarian"? We could do with the publicity if nothing else.

London. Yours, David Wilson Tadlock.

A Vacancy for a Hobby

(One vacancy through illness). OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY (AUSSEE) (June 23-July 6th). Four vacancies, FLORENCE-RAPALLO, by Air (June 20-July 2nd.) Nothing overseas. Write immediately: Rev. Parkinson, 18a, Westbourne Grove, Scarborough.

THE CALENDAR OF THE CHURCHES

SUNDAY, MAY 8, 1960

Ashton, Unitarian Church, Stamp Street, 11 and 6. Rev. W. R. Tanner
Ashton-u-Lyne, New Street Meeting House, 11, 3.15, 7. Harold Nicholas
Altrincham, Dunham Road Chapel, 11 and 6.30. Rev. A. W. Vallance
Ashton-u-Lyne, Unitarian Church, Knowsley Road, 11.15 and 3. Rev. R. Gill.
Ashton, Unitarian Chapel, Wellington Road, 6.30. Supply
Bacup, Yew Street Chapel, Unitarian, 11. Rev. R. Stanton
Bolton, All Souls, Halliwell Avenue, 11.30 and 7. Dr. A. L. Adams
Bolton, Park Church, Rosebery Street, 11.30 and 7. Dr. H. J. Maclachlan
Bolton Green (nr. Ramsbottom), Unitarian Church, 11. Rev. G. Washington
Bradford, Piac Church, High Street, 11. Rev. F. Hankinson
Bradford, Unitarian Church, Horsforth Road, 6.30 (May 15) Rev. Maurice Jeffries
Brighouse, Church of Methods, Broad Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Gordon Stuart
Brighouse, Wesley Road Church and Sunday School Mission, South Heath, 6. Dr. D. C. Archibald
Bradford, South Street, Fairfax Road, 10.45 and 6.30. Mr. R. A. Way
Blackpool, South Shore, Fairfax Road, 11 and 6.30. Mr. Frank Lewis
Bolton, Bank Street, 2.30, Sunday School, 10.30 and 6.30. Rev. R. Bramwell Price
Bolton, Unity Church, Manor Road, 11.30, Service, 6.30. Rev. Wm. Ross
Bolton, Unitarian, 3.15, and Halliwell Road, 6.30. Rev. Raymond Vesper
Bolton (Lever), Horrocks Chapel, Quaker Lane, 6.30. Rev. Stanley Hall
Bolton, Unitarian Church, Blair Hill Road, 11. Rev. Lawrence Redfern
Bradford, Bradford Avenue, 3.15. Supply
Bradford, Horton Bank Summer, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. Pierce A. Bullock
Bournemouth, Christ Church, Hampshire Road, 3. Sunday School, 6.30. Rev. Wm. Miller
Bolton, Unitarian Church, 11. Rev. G. Raymond Jones
Bradford, Unitarian Church, Horton Road, 11 and 6.30. Rev. John Rowland
Bradford, Lumb's Island Mission, 6.30. Rev. A. H. Morgan
Bradford, Oakbank Road, 11. Rev. A. H. Morgan, 6.30, Mr. R. L. Nicholson
Bury, Bank Street, 11. Rev. W. H. Rose
Cambridge, Emmanuel Church, Emmanuel Road, 11 and 6. Rev. H. Stewart Carter.
Chester, The West Gorse Unitarian Church, 3.30 (Welsh) and 6.30. Rev. Roy John
Chesham, The Church of the Great Compromise, Hazlewood Hill, 3. Miss Irene Hyde
Chesterton, Church Unitarian Church, Regal Well, 11, Sunday School, 6.30. Rev. Ian M. Gow
Cambridge, Matthew Henry's Chapel, Trinity Street, 11. Rev. E. H. Shaw, 6.30. Rev. W. J. Mackenzie
Cambridge, Elder Yard Church, 10.45 and 6.30. Supply
Chesham Bois, Amersham, 10.45 and 6.30. Miss Hermione Ferrier
Chesham, Great Hivings Street, Bradford, 11 and 6.30. Rev. E. H. Morgan
Chorley, Park Chapel, Church Street, 6.30. Supply
Chesham, Unitarian Church, Hastings Street, 11 and 6.30. Mrs. M. R. Dickin
Chesham, Bois Common Church, Penrose Road, 11. Rev. J. P. Child
Chesham, Wilton Street Chapel, 11 and 6.30. Rev. W. H. Carnell
Chesham, Baker Gate Unitarian Chapel, 6.30. Mr. B. Platt
Dewsbury, Old Meeting House, 10.45. Rev. Ronald Vesey
Dewsbury, Pine Church, Half Gate, 11. Rev. R. L. Collard and 6.30
Derby, Ashton Street, Unitarian Church, 11, Sunday School, 6.30. Rev. Philip C. Pearson
Devizes, Wesley's Chapel, Wick, 11.30 and 7.30. Rev. E. Stanley Hicks
Dudley, Old Meeting House, Wolverhampton Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Norman Hibbert
Darlington, Old Chapel, Chapel Hill, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. S. P. Wainwright
Devizes, Unitarian Church, 2C Commercial Road, 11. Service at Garth
Dunmow, St. Mark's Church, Castle Street, 11. Mr. N. G. Matthew
Exeter, George's Chapel, South Street, 6.30. Rev. Dr. F. D. Maurice-Kelsey
Gee Cross, Hyde Chapel, 11. Rev. A. R. Shepherd, 6.30. Rev. J. Hendy Smith
Glasgow, St. Vincent Street, Unitarian Church, 11. No Service
Gorton, Hyde Road, 2, Sunday School, 10.45 and 6.30. Supply
Gosforth, Hutton Street, 3. Rev. Arthur M. Grant
Gateshead, Mayfair Chapel (Greenside), 6.30. Rev. G. Malin Hewitt
Gateshead, Wood Street Church, 11.15. Mr. W. Jamieson
Hyde, Bank Street, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. G. J. Pearce
Hindley, Wesleyan Road, 10.45. Rev. Pierce Wagstaff
Hastings, Pine Christian Church, South Terrace, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Dennison Hilton
Hereford, Green Meeting, Bishop Lane, 11 and 6. Rev. E. A. Davies
Hereford, Worship Road, 11. Rev. J. Meredith Rees
Hammersmith, Hamilton House, 6. Rev. Pierce Wagstaff
Hove, Park Street Church (Unitarian), 6.30. Rev. Stanley Pope
Hyde, Bleaker Place, Gateacre Chapel, 6.30. Rev. T. M. Whitley
Kidderminster, New Meeting House, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Bryan W. Hill
Kidderminster, Heath Street Chapel, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Andrew Burns
Lancaster, St. Nicholas Street Church, 6.30. Supply
Leeds, Mill Hill Chapel, City Square, 10.30, Rev. A. L. Finnemore and 6.30
Leicester, Unitarian Church, 11. Rev. Arthur Long, 6.30, Rev. C. V. Wilson
Leicester, New Court Meeting, Regent Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Lionnel Marsh
Leeds, Mill Hill Chapel, 11. Supply
Leeds, High Street, Unitarian Church, 6.30. Rev. H. W. Hopkinson
Leicester, Ancient Chapel of Ease, 11 and 6.30. Dr. P. H. Bagnall
Leicester, Unitarian Church, 11. Rev. C. A. Pugh
Leicester, Belgrave Meeting, Mill Street, 6.30. Rev. J. Elias Morgan
Leicester, Clarendon Chapel, 11 and 6.30. Rev. S. E. Keeble
Leicester, Charles Street, Unitarian, 3, Sunday School, 6.30. Rev. C. A. Pugh
Leicester, Upper Parish, 6.30. Supply
Leicester, Ellis Road, 11. Rev. R. L. Seaver, 6.30. Supply
Leicester, Mill Street, Belgrave Road, 6. Rev. Wallace M. Lewis
Leicester, Great Meeting and Oxford Street Chapel, 6.30. Mr. James Wilson
Leicester, Belvoir Road, 11. Rev. R. G. Lee
Leicester, Unitarian Church, Belvoir Gardens Avenue, Evening Hill Gate, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Stanley Pope
Leicester, Upper Gate, Upper Lane, 6.30. Mr. Pierce Lewis
Leicester, Queen Street Church, Queen Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. E. C. Thompson
Leicester, Belgrave, New Church Hill Church, Gladstone Street, 6.30. Rev. R. E. Gowland
Leicester, Unitarian Church, Belvoir Hill, 11. Rev. Thomas P. Hoyt
Leicester, Belgrave Hall, Unitarian Church, 11. Miss Phyllis Tarrant
Leicester, Great High Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. T. E. Bennett
Leicester, Upper Street, 6.30. Rev. A. V. Fox
Leicester, Unitarian Church, Queen Street, 11. Rev. A. V. Fox
Leicester, Unitarian Church, High Street, 11. Mr. Stanley Gardner
Leicester, Belvoir Street Church, Belvoir Street, 6.30. Rev. T. L. Jones
Leicester, Belgrave Road Church, Clarendon Road, 11. Rev. Wayne M. Lewis
Leicester, Belvoir Street Meeting House, Unitarian Church, 11.30, Children's Church, 6.30. Rev. A. Ramsden
Leicester, Belgrave Unitarian Church, Fort Hill, 11. Rev. Antonio Barrenechea (also 6.30, 1st Sunday in the month)
Leicester, Belgrave Unitarian Church or Belgrave Hill Unitarian Church, 3a and 3d Sundays, 6.30. Rev. T. L. Jones
Leicester, Great Meeting, Unity Church, Newarke Road, 6.30. Rev. John Emery

Lytham St. Annes (Ansdell), Church Road, 11. Rev. R. W. Dilley
Macclesfield, King Edward Street, 10.45 and 6.30. Mr. Peter Jones
Manchester, Unitarian Church, Mosley Street, 6.30. Mrs. Hilda Hewitt
Manchester, Stockport, Unitarian Chapel, Chapel Lane, 6.30. Rev. David C. Dun.
Manchester, Cross Street Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. C. H. Bartlett
Manchester, Failsworth, Dob Lane Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30. Pastor D. Mills
Manchester, Gorton, Brookfield Church, Hyde Road, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. Maurice Jeffries
Manchester, Monton Church, Eccles, 10.45, 3 and 6.30. Rev. Dudley Richards.
Manchester, Northern Unitarian Free Lane, 6.30. Supply
Manchester, Platt Church, Rusholme, 6.30. Student
Manchester, Stretford Road Mission, 6.30. Rev. R. L. Hewitt
Manchester, Strand Chapel, Urmston (May 15) 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. Sydney H. Knight
Manchester, Willenhall Road, Cheadle-cum-Heaky, 11. Supply
Manchester, Wythenshawe, Unitarian Church, Brownley Road, Rusholme, 6.30 Rev. John Gill
Mansfield, Old Meeting House, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. Kenneth Sheratt
Marple, Unitarian Hall, 21, Stockport Road, 11 each Sunday
Middlesbrough, Free Christian Church, 6.30. Rev. Lawrence Hallworth
Middleton, Old Road Chapel, 3.15. Rev. D. C. Dun.
Newcastle-on-Tyne, The Church of the Divine Unity, Ellison Place, 11 and 6.30. Rev. John Gill
Newcastle (Ramsbottom), Bethlehem Unitarian Church, 10.30 and 6. Rev. John Mather
Northampton, Kettering Road, Church, 6.30. Rev. Lauer Tobland
Norwich, Octagon Chapel, Colegate, 11. Rev. J. A. Kennedy
Nottingham, High Pavement Chapel, 10.45. Rev. C. Gordon Bolam and 6.30
Oldbury, Unitarian Church, Birmingham Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Harold A. Gore
Oldham, Lord Street Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. T. E. Nuttall
Orpen, Manchester College Chapel, 11.30. Rev. H. D. Oliver
Padiham, Nazareth Unitarian Church, Knight Hill, 10.30 and 6. Student
Park Lane Chapel, near Wigan, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Gwynne L. Clarke
Plymouth, Unitarian Church, Notte Street, 11 and 6.30. Service
Poole, Unitarian Church, Hill Street, 11, Junior Church, 6.30. Rev. J. W. Dennis
Portsmouth, John Pounds Memorial Church, High Street, 11, Junior Church, 6.30. Rev. Jesse Sprague
Preston, Unitarian Church, Church Street, 6.30. Rev. E. J. A. Williams
Ringstone, Hants, The Meeting House, 6.30. Supply
Rochdale Chapel, nr. Horsforth, Leeds, 3. Rev. F. V. Pritchard
Rochdale, Blackwater Street, 10.30 and 2. Rev. F. W. Bass
Rossendale, Church of our Father, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. E. Phillips
Sale, Addison Road, 11. Rev. Jesse Gill
Scarborough, Unitarian Church, Westborough, 6.30. Rev. G. W. Parsonson
Sheffield (Attercliffe), 6.30. Dr. F. T. Wooding
Sheffield, Upper Chapel, 11. Rev. F. Sorrell
Shipley, Unity Church, Commercial Road, 11. Rev. E. D. Davis and 6.30. Mr. W. E. Bond
Sheffield, Upper Chapel, 11 and 6.30. Rev. G. Stanley Whitby
Shrewsbury, High Street, Unitarian, 11. Rev. A. H. Lewis
Shrewton, Old Meeting, Unitarian, High Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. H. Whitaker
Southampton, Church of the Saviour, Lowden Road, 6.30. Rev. Frances Tebby
Southend-on-Sea, Disseley Road, 6.30. Mr. R. H. Cornish
Stockport, Portland Street Church, 11 and 6.30. Rev. T. J. Jones
Stockport, Unitarian Church, St. Peter's Gate, 10.30. Rev. J. E. Blackburn, 6.30 Rev. P. B. Gregory
St. Helens, Corporation Street, 6.30. Supply
Stockton-on-Tees, Wellington Street, 6.30. Rev. A. D. Williams (also 11, Second Sunday in the month)
Southport, Presbyterian Unitarian Church, 11. Rev. C. Stanyon
Swansea, Unitarian Church, High Street, 6.30. Rev. L. Elwyn Short (also 11, First Sunday in the month)
Sheffield, Pound Free Christian Meeting House, 11. Rev. L. Elwyn Short
Sidmouth, Sidmouth Hall Road, 6.30. Rev. J. E. Blackburn
Taunton, Mary St. Chapel, 11. Rev. Wm. Miller
Tarporley, Old Meeting House, Ancient Road, 6.30. Rev. G. Kenney
Tunbridge, Unitarian Church, 10.45 Mr. D. Shelton and 6. Mrs. Walker
Tunbridge, Unity Church, off The Tyning, 11. Rev. Cranmer Eames
Tunbridge, Cranbrook Unitarian Church, 6. Rev. S. Sowerby
Wakefield, Calder Street, 10.30 and 6.30. Rev. Rice Wigg
Warwick, Unitarian Chapel, High Street, 7. Rev. H. Maconie
Warwick, Friends' House, Church Road (by permission), 7.30 (last Sunday in the month)
Wallasey, Moorfield Church, Manor Road, 11, Supply, 6.30. Rev. E. H. Shaw
Wakefield, Unitarian Free Church, Stanhope Street, 11, Rev. R. J. Wellington, 2.30, Sunday School
West Bromwich, Lodge Road, 11, Gibbon's Church, 6.30. Rev. R. J. Williams B.
West Kirby, Brookfield Gardens, 11. Rev. Maurice Jeffries (also 6.30, First Sunday in the month)
Wrexham, Flowergate, 2.30. Rev. G. W. Parsonson
Wrexham, Hope Row, 10.45. Rev. J. Hendy Smith, Syad, 6.30. Rev. A. B. Duncan
Yeovil, St. Andrew's Church, 6.30. Rev. L. A. Garrett
The Sunbeam, Unitarian Hymn accompany provision for those unable to attend a Unitarian Church. For information write to the Secretary, N.U.F.F., Essex Hall, 1-6 Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.2.

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide, Unitarian Christian Church, Wakefield St., 11 and 7. Rev. Clive Cowen
Melbourne, Unitarian Church, Collins St. Place, C.2; Unitarian Half Hour Broadcast, 4.15. Service: 4 p.m. second Sunday in each month, Evening 7 p.m. Rev. W. Jones
Perth, Western Australia, Unitarian Free Christian Fellowship, Rev. R. H. Thomasson, 122 Hale Street, Applecross, West Australia
Sydney, New South Wales, Unitarian Church, 13 Francis Street (off College St.) 7.15. Rev. H. G. Burrows, Home Telephone LA 5323
Unitarian Fellowship of Australia, 1 Glen Alba, Melbourne, C.2. Minister: Rev. W. Jones. Services as announced.
Seaton Congregational Church, Acacia Road, Seaford (Vic.), 2.3, weekly at 10 a.m. Public Worship, fortnightly, 2.30 p.m. Minister: Rev. W. Jones

CANADA

Montreal, Church of the Messiah, Stanbridge Street West and Sherbrooke Street, H. Rev. Arthur Cormier
Toronto, First Unitarian Church, 175 St. Clair Avenue West, 11, Rev. Jesse H. Holmes
Vancouver, B.C., Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 1,750 Tenth Avenue West, 11, Rev. A. F. Skinner

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland, Unitarian Church, Symonds Road, 11 and 7. Mr. W. J. Wilson
Wanganui, Senior memorial, Hospital Hill, Wanui, Tel. 41-252

SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town, Rose Street, 11, Sunday School: 3, Sunday, Rev. Maurice C. Burton

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Miscellaneous

IN the MATTER of
(THOMAS PARGETER'S OF FOLKOTE CHARITY AND THE CHARITY OF JOHN WAND for annuities for Poor Women)

THE TRUSTEES of this CHARITY Give Notice that they will meet on the 14th day of JUNE 1960 at 24 HARBORNE ROAD BIRMINGHAM 15 at 11.30. o'clock to APPOINT AN ANNUITANT of the Charity.

Deserving women, never having been married, of the age of 55 years and upwards are eligible for the appointment. Preference will be given to those who have shown reasonable providence, those who have been reduced by misfortune and those who have made a strenuous but unavailing effort to support themselves.

Application for the appointment must be made in the first place in writing to the Trustees or their Clerk at 24 Harborne Road Birmingham 15 on or before the 14th May 1960. Every applicant must state her name, address, age and occupation, and must be prepared to produce sufficient testimonials and other evidence of her qualification for the appointment, and, except in the case of physical disability, to attend in person.

J. T. A. Sarra,
Clerk to the Trustees.

1st *April*, 1960.

DUPLICATING, Shorthand, Typing, Translating. Mabel Eyles, 10, Beaconsfield Road, London, N.11. ENT 3324.

Birth

GORING: On May 3rd at Lewisham Hospital, S.E.13, to Rosemary (nee Blake) and Jeremy, a son, Charles Robert.

Death

On going to press we regret to report the sudden death of the Rev. Fred Sokell, Minister of Fulwood Old Chapel, Sheffield.

"Price and Lang"

For competition purposes, Harwich Senior YFL was divided into three "houses" named after Priestley, Newton and Dickens. But to mark the beginning of the scheme under which the Rev. Arthur J. Long and the Rev. E. Shirwill Price are sharing pastoral oversight at the church, the branch has decided to inaugurate its "house" system and has entitled them—Price and Lang.

LONDON DOMESTIC MISSION SOCIETY

ANNUAL MEETING

at

28 BELL STREET, EDGWARE ROAD, N.W.1
THURSDAY, 12th MAY, 1960
at 7.30 p.m.

Addresses by
Mr. G. H. LOWTHIAN, M.B.E.
and
Councillor the Rev. WALTER M. LONG

It is hoped as many subscribers and friends as possible will show their sympathy and support by being present.

Refreshments will be served at 7.0 p.m.

Dr. Emerson Lahee

It is with regret that we record the death lately in Boston, U.S.A., of Dr. Emerson Lahee, for many years Editor of the *Universalist Leader* and manager of the Universalist Publishing House. He was known to many from this country who visited the United States, and who found him a dynamic and lovable personality. Soon after the end of the war Dr. Lahee visited Europe to examine opportunities for Universalists engaging in relief work in Holland and Germany. At that time he came to London and preached in a number of our churches in the I.D.P.A. area. For some years he had been fighting a courageous battle against ill health. His sudden death has stunned for the moment his colleagues at the Universalist headquarters with whom he has worked unstintingly for many years and who loved him dearly.

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